

# It's My Turn!



## Student-led Learning In The Elementary Music Classroom

### Presenters:

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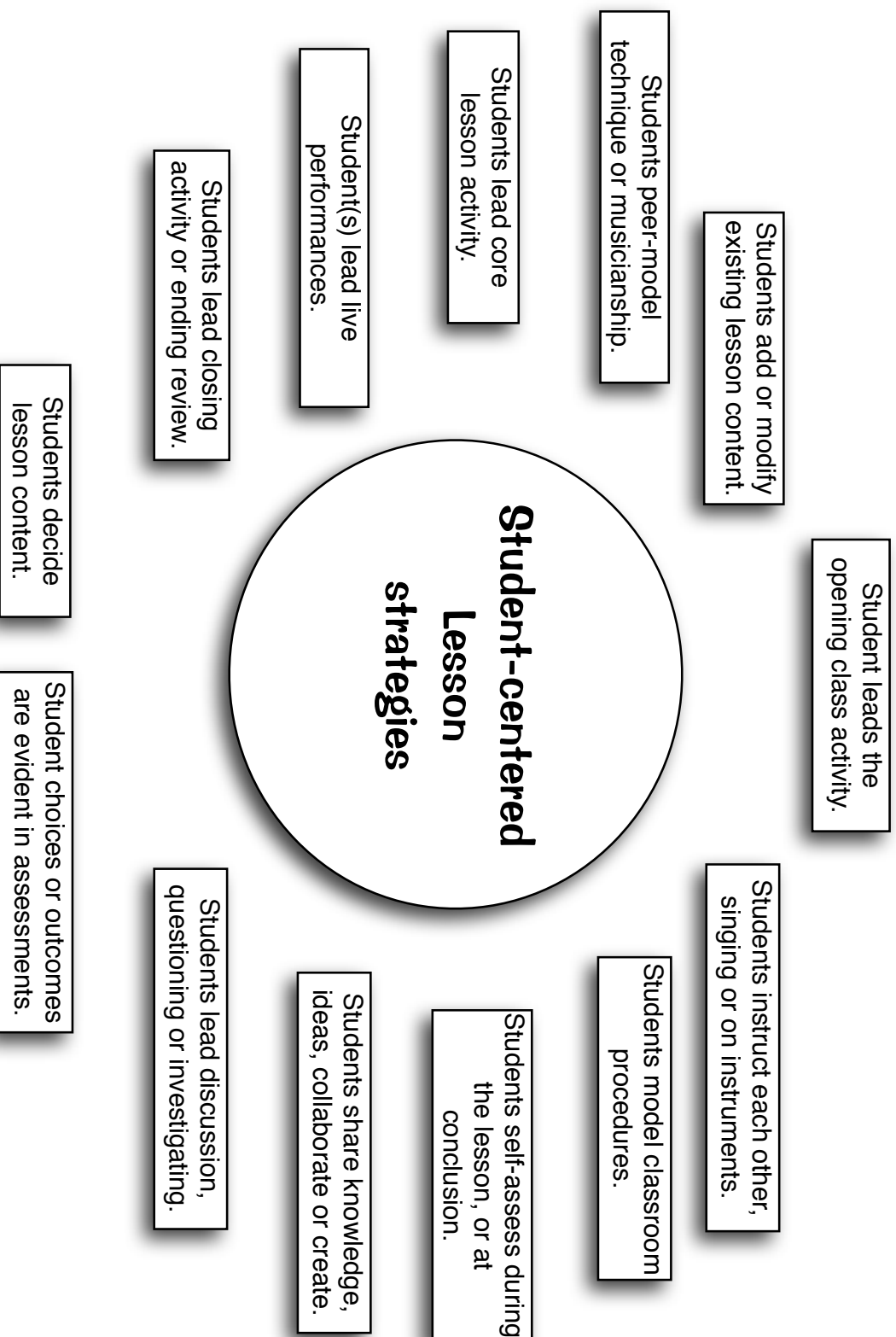
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# Student-led Lesson Design



*“Leadership is a relationship between leader and led that presses to know what is really going on, to act courageously on that understanding, and to live authentically.” - Bob Terry*

## Student-led Lesson Design Strategies

Students add or modify existing lesson content:	Students instruct each other, singing or on instruments:	Students lead discussion, questioning or investigating:
Students peer-model technique or musicianship:		
	Students share knowledge, ideas, collaborate or create:	Student choices or outcomes are evident in assessments:
Students model classroom procedures:		
	Students self-assess during the lesson, or at conclusion:	Students lead closing activity or ending review:
Students lead core lesson activity:		
	Student leads the opening class activity:	Students decide lesson content:
Student(s) lead live performances:		

STUDENT-LED ELEMENT:	Always	Sometimes	Seldom
My students lead an opening class activity.			
My students demonstrate/model musicianship for their peers.			
My lessons allow for students to add to or modify its content.			
My lessons allow student choices to affect the objective/outcome.			
My students get to select key lesson content.			
My students get to teach other students what they know.			
My students get to self-assess or rate themselves.			
My students get to progress at their own pace.			
My classroom management/accountability includes student choices.			
Students share ideas, create together, collaborate, affecting the outcome.			
My students lead a closing activity.			
My assessments are adjusted to match student choices in outcomes.			
My public performances include student-led components.			

### **TIPS TO BUILDING A STUDENT-LED CLASSROOM:**

- Establish a student-friendly, student-valued classroom.
- Establish class rules based on student voice/student choice.
- Begin a gradual release process.
- Start simple. Students need to warm up to anything new.
- Plan and design lessons that include student choices and opportunities to lead.
- Allow assessments to have flexibility based on student choices and input.
- RELAX! At the end of the day, it's all good!

***“Classroom ownership is about maximizing the potential of the student, and discovering for themselves that they are the ones that come up with the best ideas.”***

## Classroom Management and Student-led Learning:

How classroom management is implemented will have an impact on the effectiveness of learning. Does the teacher see classroom rules as something that they enforce, or that for which the students own responsibility? With a student-led classroom, management is based upon permissions rather than consequences and restrictions. Giving students the permission to take the lead teaches them how to manage their own behavior. Structuring class routines and learning expectations that allows students to self-manage their behavior returns accountability to the student or group. When students know how to self-check their actions, the teacher can focus more on instruction.

Often times, however, classroom management is interpreted as classroom control. Being in charge does not always mean having to be in control. Feeling comfortable with allowing students to lead can conflict with more traditional instructional approaches where the teacher is orchestrating every aspect of learning in order to tightly control the outcome. Building a student-led classroom involves taking risks, and breaking away from traditional teacher-centered instructional practices. It requires valuing the learner's ability to contribute something meaningful beyond simply giving the correct answer just so the objective can be reached.

In some scenarios, the negative behavior of a class can be the result of an imbalance between what the teacher needs to teach (objective), and how the student wants to learn (personal choices). Including students' choices in a lesson can create immediate buy-in, and puts learning back in balance by establishing a combined effort between teacher and student who work together to reach the same goal.

When classroom management is student-centered, student decisions have a positive impact on the success of a lesson as their choices become part of a structured routine. Classroom routines that include student choices tells the student that their voice is always valued in the learning experience. Classroom management is more effective in a room where the students feel safe and valued, that the classroom belongs to them and not the teacher.

***“When we empower students to make decisions about their learning, we help them grow as adults who believe they are capable of choosing their own path of success, and choose it with confidence because they have already experienced what it feels like to succeed as a leader.”***

## **Classroom Management and Student-led Learning:**

### ***Student-led learning in the regular classroom:***

#### **Observations:**

- Students lead the question and answering.
- Clear student-led routines and pacing have been established through practice.
- Students read essential questions or leads the class in the reading the questions together.
- Students turn and talk on essential question before teacher responds to start lesson.
- The classroom teacher addresses the student as 'teacher.'
- Regular use of self-assess rubrics.
- Teacher circulates and is rarely in front of the class.
- Teacher statements: "I'm invisible" and "If you need help, you can always call out to a friend."
- Use of whiteboard visuals (PPT) during instruction: "I know I'm on the right track if....."
- Teacher has an "accountable person" to spot other students being awesome.

#### **Creating a student-led music room: Advice from classroom teachers:**

- As a teacher, be comfortable with making mistakes and not being perfect.
- There is chaos involved at the beginning of this process. Be patient.
- *You are trying to move from what you want the student to do for you to what the students need to do for themselves.*

***"A person is empowered by the choices they make for themselves, not by the choices someone else makes for them."***

## Students share knowledge ideas, collaborate, or create

- When working in small groups, the first ideas – or even just the most opinionated ideas – are often the ones that prevail. Consider strategies that allow everyone's opinion to be heard, like having students write down, share, and then vote on the best idea.

## Students add to or modify existing lesson content

- Teaching a folk dance? Have students learn, perform, and then modify the movements.
- Change the lyrics to a song.
- Be sure to require a reason for the modification.
- Be sure to allow time for students to self-assess their modifications.

## Using Student Instrumental Compositions as Concert Repertoire

There are many ways to have students create compositions that they feel are performance-worthy. Experiment to find one that fits the learning style of your unique ensemble.

- Use class compositions as the basis of your melody or primary rhythm
- Use an improvisation session to brainstorm ideas, allowing each student a chance to be heard. Encourage students to repeat, borrow, and steal ideas from each other!
- Consider writing out a folk song melody and allowing students to arrange it by changing dynamics, tempo, pitch, rhythm, or instrumentation.
- START SIMPLE! Add on as time and student ability permits.

# Using Student Conductors in a Performance

## Things to know:

- Have all students learn to play the piece first.
- Take time now and then to have the entire ensemble sing through their parts as they conduct as a group. Watch for strong conductors and choose those kids.
- Your ensemble members will need to be taught to trust the student conductor. (If we all mess up together, the audience will never know!)
- Students who are shy will watch the other students conduct and eventually step up to the plate ... Although they sometimes may need encouragement! 😊

## Peer-to-Peer Instruction: Just Flip Your Classroom!

- Find your strong students who need that extra challenge!
- Use your district Learning Management System (such as Edsby, Schoology, Canvas, etc.) to share videos.
- Chorus choreography teams
- Instrumental ensemble sectionals led by students
- Remember to get permission from parents and to carefully screen footage if you decide to have students create the videos for each other.

## Read up!

- <http://kodalycorner.blogspot.com/2016/04/fostering-student-centered-environment.html>
- <https://www.nureva.com/blog/education/11-ways-to-increase-student-led-learning-in-your-classroom>



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**Supplemental resource materials will be distributed  
during the session presentation.**